

EARLY FOURTEENTH-CENTURY
ILLUMINATIONS FROM PALERMO

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I wish to dedicate this paper to Professor Richard Krautheimer, in friendship and affection. It is based on a lecture delivered at the Symposium on "The Byzantine Contribution to Western Art of the Twelfth and Thirteenth Centuries," held at Dumbarton Oaks from April 29 to May 1, 1965. I am grateful to Professor Ernst Kitzinger for constant help and advice in the preparation of the lecture; to Professors Irving Lavin, Millard Meiss, and Meyer Schapiro for various discussions of certain aspects of the manuscripts dealt with in this paper; and to Professors Paul A. Underwood and Kurt Weitzmann who, with their usual generosity, allowed me to reproduce photographs of details of the Kariye Djami mosaics and of several icons from St. Catherine's Monastery on Mount Sinai respectively. The Palermitan origin of the Turin manuscript was established on entirely different lines by Professor Schapiro whose findings will be published in the near future.

The recently published book by Mrs. Angela Daneu Lattanzi, *Lineamenti di storia della miniatura in Sicilia* (Florence, 1965) reached me only after this paper had been sent to the printer.

Hugo Buchthal

ON Easter Monday, 1282, the people of Palermo rose in rebellion against their harsh and unpopular Angevin masters. The Angevin flag was torn down and everywhere replaced by the imperial eagle which Frederick II had allotted as a badge to the city of his childhood.¹ Through a delegation sent to King Peter of Aragon, the Sicilians offered the crown to his consort, Constance, daughter of Frederick's son Manfred. She was to be the heiress of the Svevian cause in Sicily and was to safeguard the dynastic succession, just as an earlier Constance, daughter of King Roger and mother of Frederick II, had been the link between the Hauteville and Svevian dynasties.² Peter, who had for some time planned armed intervention in Sicily, accepted the offer and set sail, to place his wife on the throne of her ancestors; he solemnly promised that he would observe the rights and privileges of the Sicilians, as they had been observed in the days of Good King William. The accession of Peter and Constance was commemorated in a fresco in the Cappella dell'Incoronazione in the Cathedral of Palermo, which showed the Pantocrator enthroned, flanked by the standing figures of SS. Peter and Paul, the patron saints of the Norman Kingdom, and tendering the crown to the kneeling royal couple³—no doubt a deliberate echo of the compositional scheme of the great mosaic over the throne on the west wall of the Cappella Palatina, in its original state one of the latest mosaics set during the Norman period.⁴ To the Sicilians this fresco, which unfortunately has not survived, must have carried the same message as King Peter's pledge, that the new regime was to re-establish the liberal traditions of the Norman Kingdom which had been so brutally disregarded by the French henchmen of King Charles of Anjou.

The national revival had a bad start. Peter died in 1285, and his eldest son, Alfonso, in 1291. The second son, James, who had first succeeded his father in Sicily, had to return to Aragon; his youngest brother, Frederick, was left behind as lieutenant-general of the island kingdom. James did not live up to the challenge of his Sicilian heritage. Constantly harrassed by Neapolitan forces and embarrassed by the active hostility of the papacy, he finally yielded to pressure and agreed to cede the island to the Holy See, eventually to be handed back to Angevin domination.⁵ From the Sicilian point of view, this was no less than treason. James was disowned; young Frederick, who had from the beginning been extremely popular with his adopted countrymen, was proclaimed king, and in 1296 was solemnly crowned in Palermo, amid scenes of extraordinary rejoicing and enthusiasm. For the first time in its history Sicily had become a truly independent kingdom.

¹ S. Runciman, *The Sicilian Vespers* (Cambridge, 1958), p. 214 ff.

² A. De Stefano, *Federico III d'Aragona re di Sicilia* (Bologna, 1956), p. 52.

³ P. Gramignani, "La cappella dell'incoronazione di Palermo," *Archivio storico siciliano*, 54 (1934), p. 227 ff.

⁴ O. Demus, *The Mosaics of Norman Sicily* (London, 1949), p. 57, pl. 39.

⁵ H. Rohde, *Der Kampf um Sizilien in den Jahren 1292–1302* (Berlin-Leipzig, 1913).

Frederick, a valiant, intelligent, and highly impressionable youth, was very conscious of his Norman-Svevian ancestry. He assumed the title *Rex Siciliae, Ducatus Apuliae, ac Principatus Capuae*, which had been that of his Norman forebears, and modelled his administration on that of his illustrious Svevian namesake.⁶ On his accession he proclaimed the main points of his political program: to reconquer the ancient mainland possessions of his realm and to avenge the deaths of his predecessors, Manfred and Conradin.⁷ His reign was to last for over forty years; even though he suffered frequent reverses, he gained new prestige and authority for the crown, championed the Ghibelline cause in Italy, and took the first steps to weld his multiracial subjects into a single and united nation.⁸ The political aspirations of the Sicilians had at last found a competent national leader.

The revival can also be traced in the artistic field. Thus, the style of the mosaic in the main apse of the Cathedral in Messina, which can be dated in the years between 1322 and 1333, is essentially in the tradition of the twelfth century.⁹ The movement may moreover be studied in great detail in a small group of lavishly illustrated manuscripts which can be attributed to a scriptorium working in Palermo. Two single miniatures representing New Testament subjects, dating from the late thirteenth century, are copied direct from the corresponding mosaics in the Cathedral at Monreale;¹⁰ the Gospel manuscript from which they were cut out may have contained a whole cycle based on the Norman mosaics. They must belong to the same retrospective trend as the Aragonese coronation fresco mentioned at the beginning of this paper, which was their close contemporary.¹¹ A somewhat later manuscript in the National Library at Turin,¹² with the lives and passions of about sixty saints and profusely illustrated in the same easily recognizable style, dates from the reign of King Frederick. It includes two drawings from the lives of SS. Peter and Paul copied from the mosaics of the Cappella Palatina.¹³ The Turin manuscript is indeed of crucial importance for the study of Sicilian art during the Aragonese revival. The principle of selection that must have guided the master of the two Gospel fragments, namely, to renew the art of a bygone age and to establish a link with the kingdom's artistic past, is here practiced on a grand scale. Some of the manuscript models used for its illustration can

⁶ De Stefano, *op. cit.*, p. 101.

⁷ K. L. Hitzfeld, *Studien zu den religiösen und politischen Anschauungen Friedrichs III. von Sizilien* (Berlin, 1930), p. 11.

⁸ E. Haberkern, *Der Kampf um Sizilien in den Jahren 1302-1337* (Berlin-Leipzig, 1921).

⁹ V. Lazarev, "Early Italo-Byzantine Painting in Sicily," *The Burlington Magazine*, 63 (1933), p. 284, pl. II B; P. Toesca, *Il Trecento* (Turin, 1951), p. 694. Archbishop Guidotto de Talbiati, who died in 1333, is included among the donors represented in the mosaic.

¹⁰ H. Buchthal, "Some Sicilian Miniatures of the Thirteenth Century," *Miscellanea pro Arte, Hermann Schnitzler zur Vollendung des 60. Lebensjahres* (Düsseldorf, 1965), pp. 185-187.

¹¹ The panel of the Hodegetria in the archbishop's palace at Monreale belongs to the same trend, cf. W. Krönig, "Das Tafelbild der Hodegetria in Monreale," *Miscellanea pro Arte, ibid.*, p. 179 ff.

¹² Biblioteca Nazionale, I.II.17; cf. F. Pasini, *Codices manuscripti bibl. Reg. Taurinensis* (1749), no. DLXI (k.VI.19); Carta-Cipolla-Frati, *Atlante paleografico-artistico* (Turin, 1899), tab. 63; A. Poncelet, *Catalogus codicum hagiographicorum latinorum Bibl. Nat. Taurinensis* (Brussels, 1909), pp. 445-448; H. Buchthal, "Notes on a Sicilian Manuscript of the Early Fourteenth Century," in *Essays in the History of Art presented to Rudolf Wittkower* (London 1967; in the press).

¹³ *Ibid.*

still be accurately determined in spite of a marked attempt to modernize them and, in the process of copying, to bring them, as it were, up to date.

The most comprehensive cycle in the manuscript illustrates the life of St. Benedict, founder of Monte Cassino, the home of the Benedictine order, which was situated on the northern frontier of the Norman Kingdom.¹⁴ It can be compared almost scene by scene with the even more comprehensive set of Benedict pictures in the well-known eleventh-century lectionary in the Vatican Library,¹⁵ which was written at Monte Cassino itself; clearly the two cycles reproduce a common model and represent the same pictorial tradition. Only one example will be given here: the miniature illustrating the mysterious fire in the monastery kitchen which was extinguished through the Saint's command to pour water over the pagan idol which had been found concealed under the kitchen floor (fig. 1). In spite of numerous differences of detail it is obvious that it repeats the formula of the Vatican manuscript (fig. 2). In a few instances it can even be shown that the Turin manuscript reproduces the common archetype more completely and more faithfully than does the lectionary.¹⁶ There can be no doubt that its model was a close relative of the lectionary, a manuscript illustrated at Monte Cassino during the scriptorium's finest period, the second half of the eleventh century; it was an "authoritative" illustration of the patron Saint's life produced in the great abbey which had played such a prominent part in the political and artistic history of the Norman Kingdom.¹⁷

Among the eastern saints whose lives are included in the manuscript are Basil, Nicholas, Mary of Egypt, Euphrosyne, and a few others. This is a comparatively small group, and one would, a priori, expect its illustrations to derive from Byzantine models. Unfortunately, hardly any hagiographical cycles in Greek manuscripts have survived that could be adduced to prove the point. I shall discuss here only the miniatures from the life of St. Nicholas, because several Byzantine icons have recently become known which offer themselves for detailed comparison.¹⁸ The icons are either triptychs which include a succession of narrative scenes, or, even more frequently, single panels showing the portrait of the Saint surrounded by a comprehensive cycle of incidents from his life, usually sixteen, but sometimes as many as twenty-four; it is clear that these scenes must in their turn go back to a cycle in an illuminated manuscript. Most of them date from the middle Byzantine period, but the tradition continued well into modern times. The iconography of the single scenes remained more or less constant through the centuries.

Only those events recounted in Greek texts of the Saint's life are illustrated—¹⁹ none of the many legends that were added to the story in the Latin West—

¹⁴ *Ibid.*

¹⁵ Vat. lat. 1202; cf. M. Inguanez & M. Avery, *Miniature cassinesi del secolo XI*, I (Montecassino, 1934).

¹⁶ H. Buchthal, "Notes on a Sicilian Manuscript," *op. cit.*

¹⁷ Cf. O. Demus, *op. cit.*, p. 209.

¹⁸ G. and M. Sotiriou, *Icones du Mont Sinaï*, I (Athens, 1956), pls. 165, 170; K. Weitzmann, "Fragments of an Early St. Nicholas Triptych on Mount Sinai," *Τμήματα Γ. Σωτηρίου* (Athens, 1964), pp. 1-23.

¹⁹ They are collected in G. Anrich, *Hagios Nikolaos. Der heilige Nikolaos in der griechischen Kirche*, 2 vols. (Leipzig-Berlin, 1913, 1917). Cf. also A. Grabar, *La peinture religieuse en Bulgarie* (Paris, 1928), p. 127 ff.

and most of them have close parallels on the Byzantine icons. The Saint saves three innocent men from execution by miraculously appearing on the spot and halting the executioner's sword (figs. 3, 4); the victims kneel on the ground, with their hands are tied behind their backs, as described in the *Hermeneia*.²⁰ The miracle had been witnessed by three generals who served in the Emperor Constantine's army; and it so happened that soon afterward the generals were thrown into prison on the basis of false accusations (figs. 5, 6). Remembering the miracle, they prayed to St. Nicholas, who promptly appeared to the Emperor in his sleep and informed him of this miscarriage of justice (figs. 7, 8). Another scene shared by both cycles is that of the sailors caught in a storm and praying to the Saint for deliverance, whereupon he miraculously appears on board ship and the devils who had caused the storm take to flight (figs. 9, 10). Finally, the last incident illustrated in Turin, which has no counterpart in this series, reappears on an early eighteenth-century icon that follows the same iconographical tradition but has a more comprehensive cycle;²¹ this is the popular story of the poor father of the three girls for whom St. Nicholas provides a dowry to enable them to marry. The three girls are seen sleeping in the same bed, the father watches as the Saint throws a bag with money into the room (figs. 11, 12). This again corresponds exactly to the description in the *Hermeneia*.²² There can be no doubt that the model actually used by the Sicilian master for his Nicholas cycle was a middle Byzantine manuscript, probably of the eleventh or the first half of the twelfth century.

Thus, at least some of the models of the Turin manuscript can still be reconstructed on the basis of their iconography and style. There was a Benedictine model of the second half of the eleventh century from Cassino; a Byzantine source, or, rather, several Byzantine sources, of much the same date, which were responsible for the cycles of Greek saints' lives; and, perhaps most important of all, the late Comnenian art of Monreale, with its lively and agitated drapery design, and its intricate systems of curling folds.²³ But the models were never slavishly copied. Thus, the illuminators were at pains to transfer, as it were, the various legends into a Sicilian *ambiente*. Among the most striking instances are the numerous examples of buildings surmounted by cupolas, by those gored domes of Muhammadan inspiration which were an outstanding feature of Sicilian architecture in the first half of the twelfth century (fig. 13); it will here suffice to mention the Palermitan churches of S. Cataldo and S. Giovanni degli Eremiti.²⁴ Other buildings represented in the miniatures are more modern in character, such as the late Romanesque and

²⁰ Dionysius of Fournà, *The Painters' Guide* (Ερμηνεία τῶν ἑωγράφων) ed. by A. Papadopoulos-Kerameus (St. Petersburg, 1909), p. 181. The description even shares with the Sicilian miniature one detail which does not recur in the Byzantine icon: the eyes of the three innocent men are bandaged. Our figure 4 is a detail of the fifteenth-century icon, Sotiriou plate 170; our figures 6, 8, and 10 reproduce details of the late twelfth-century icon, Sotiriou plate 165. I owe the photographs to the kindness of Professor K. Weitzmann.

²¹ K. Weitzmann, *op. cit.*, fig. 7.

²² Dionysius of Fournà, *op. cit.*, p. 180. Again the Sicilian miniature follows the description more closely than does the icon.

²³ Cf. E. Kitzinger, *The Mosaics of Monreale* (Palermo, 1960), p. 70.

²⁴ Cf., e.g., I. Biagi, *Palermo* (Bergamo, 1929), pp. 44, 48.

early Gothic church façades with rosette windows (fig. 14), of the type of the church of S. Francesco in Palermo.²⁵ These two architectural features, the cupolas, and the rosette windows, were probably not copied from any pictorial model, but straight from nature, in order to supply a local background to the various legends here claimed as relevant to the island's past history.

Still, the illuminators of Palermo were not entirely conservative and retrospective, but were also in close touch with contemporary developments on the Italian mainland. The miniature of the three generals in prison from the story of the life of St. Nicholas (fig. 5) is a case in point. The compositional scheme is borrowed from that of Joseph in prison explaining the dreams of Pharaoh's baker and butler, as illustrated in the Byzantine Octateuchs.²⁶ The prison itself, however, has a much closer parallel in the Early Christian fresco representing the same scene in Old St. Paul's in Rome, as restored by Cavallini (fig. 15):²⁷ round arches rest on slender columns with sculptured capitals, and the opening in front is secured by a grating of iron bars. One is almost tempted to think of a direct connection between the Roman fresco and the Sicilian miniature.

Even more telling are the numerous instances of scenes set in interiors which are represented in a foreshortened setting, either with one side wall seen from the outside and the coffered ceiling receding in parallel lines (fig. 16), or in strictly frontal view, with both side walls seen in perspective from within and the roof beams converging toward the center (fig. 17). The device was in use in classical Roman painting, and the miniature of Dido's death in the Vatican Virgil manuscript²⁸ shows that it survived into the Early Christian period. Its revival in the late thirteenth and early fourteenth centuries was in all probability connected with the restoration of the Early Christian fresco cycles in the basilica of St. Paul's in Rome.²⁹ Among the first tentative examples, from the years just after 1290, are Cavallini's mosaics in S. Maria in Trastevere; slightly later are the frescoes of the "Isaac master" in Assisi.³⁰ The relevant illustrations in our manuscript, however, reflect a more developed stage; the Sicilian illuminators must have been familiar with early Trecento works such as Giotto's frescoes in Padua and Duccio's Maestà in Siena. There are indeed several miniatures in which the back wall of the room is adorned with a row of blind arches (fig. 18), a distinct reminiscence of the decoration of the chamber in the scene of Christ before Annas, in the passion cycle of the Maestà.³¹ It is true that these latest achievements of contemporary painting in Tuscany are imitated here without much understanding. The two types of

²⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 82.

²⁶ K. Weitzmann, *op. cit.*, p. 2.

²⁷ John White, "Cavallini and the Lost Frescoes in S. Paolo," *Journal of the Warburg and Courtauld Institutes*, 19 (1956), pl. 28f; St. Waetzoldt, *Die Kopien des 17. Jahrhunderts nach Mosaiken und Wandmalereien in Rom* (Vienna-Munich, 1964), fig. 352.

²⁸ J. de Wit, *Die Miniaturen des Vergilius Vaticanus* (Amsterdam, 1959), pl. 15, 1.

²⁹ J. White, *op. cit.*, p. 93.

³⁰ J. White, *The Birth and Rebirth of Pictorial Space* (London, 1957), p. 31 ff.; E. Panofsky, *Renaissance and Renascences in Western Art* (Stockholm, 1959), p. 136; M. Meiss, *Giotto and Assisi* (New York, 1960), p. 11.

³¹ J. White, *The birth... of Pictorial Space*, pl. 18b.

box-like interior setting are endlessly and indiscriminately repeated throughout the manuscript, without the slightest change, as if they were copied mechanically from a pattern book; frequently the drawing of perspective is faulty, and in many instances it is painfully obvious that the scenes were fitted for better or worse into an architectural frame to which they did not really belong. Still, their presence is significant, as they provide us with a valuable clue to the date of the manuscript: it cannot be placed earlier than the second decade of the fourteenth century.

Contemporary models can also be traced in some figural representations. One initial represents St. Jerome writing the obituary of his favorite disciple, Paula (fig. 19). The figure of the writing Saint is entirely traditional, as is the winged dragon forming the left part of the initial; this was a standard scheme in Sicily frequently found in initials of the twelfth-century school of Messina.³² But a second type of initial is, as it were, superimposed on this traditional device, a type derived from contemporary Bolognese illumination. The initial from Bologna here reproduced, from a Bible of the late thirteenth century, also represents St. Jerome (fig. 20), this time composing the prologue to the Bible, and shown next to a nude, caryatid-like figure, which reappears in the Sicilian initial to complete the shape of the letter "A." Similar caryatids recur several times in other contemporary manuscripts from Bologna.³³ Moreover, the characteristically Bolognese spiky acanthus ornament is quite unorganically incorporated into the winged dragon scheme. We may take it that this particular initial was modernized in the light of contemporary Bolognese illumination.

Another curious initial is found at the beginning of the life of St. Martin (fig. 21): a full-length portrait of the Saint, represented as an old man with grey hair and beard, exactly as he appears in the marginal miniatures on the following pages illustrating his activities as bishop of Tours. But at the same time he is shown here in military attire, an allusion to his early career as a soldier in the Roman army, and evidently imitating Byzantine images of Eastern military saints. The unusual iconography may perhaps be explained as a reference to the political ambitions of King Roger during the period of the Second Crusade.³⁴ The Bishop of Tours, a French saint par excellence, was one of the traditional patrons of the French king and the French army; indeed, he was the nearest equivalent to the Byzantine warrior saints. His inclusion among the mosaics of the south transept of the Cappella Palatina in Palermo, on the main picture wall of the sanctuary, in bishop's vestments and in a position corresponding to one of the Greek bishops in the northern wing,³⁵ had been a pointed tribute to the military alliance between Sicily and France of about the middle of the twelfth century, which was directed against the

³² Cf., e.g., H. Buchthal, "A School of Miniature Painting in Norman Sicily," in *Late Classical and Mediaeval Studies in Honor of A. M. Friend* (Princeton, 1955), p. 312ff., figs. 3, 5, 6, 19, 20.

³³ Thus, an example similar to the one here reproduced is found in the Jerome initial at the beginning of the Paris Bible, Bibl. Nat., Latin 18.

³⁴ E. Kitzinger, "The Mosaics of the Cappella Palatina in Palermo," *The Art Bulletin*, 31 (1949), p. 289.

³⁵ O. Demus, *op. cit.*, pl. 12; Kitzinger, "Cappella Palatina . . .," fig. 5.

Byzantine Empire. The Normans, however, had not gone so far as actually to represent him as a soldier. The bold step of turning him into a Byzantine military figure was taken only by the Sicilian illuminators of the Aragonese period, who were given the patriotic task of recreating in visual form the cultural and political atmosphere of the twelfth century. Moreover, it is clear that they did not take up an earlier iconographical type, but let themselves be inspired by the figure of one of those youthful soldiers which are so frequent in early Palaeologan art. The frescoes of the Kariye Camii, almost exactly contemporaneous with our manuscript, provide several striking parallels.³⁶ There can be little doubt that the Sicilian illuminator used a similar Byzantine model, in all probability not a fresco but a miniature, and provided it with the aged head of the Tournon Bishop, which befits neither a soldier, nor, for that matter, St. Martin before his consecration. Here is the first indication that in addition to the various traditional sources used for the cycles of saints' lives, the scriptorium also had very up-to-date, contemporary Byzantine models, which the illuminators not only copied, but also re-interpreted for their own ends.

There are also a few figures copied in the eleventh- or twelfth-century style of their models, which are provided with flowing cloaks blown up by the wind, a characteristically Palaeologan motif which is, as it were, grafted on to the original pattern of the drapery. This is again clear evidence that the illuminators, in addition to drawing on traditional models of all kinds, were also in close touch with contemporary developments in Constantinople itself (fig. 22).

There is a second manuscript, now in the Vatican Library (Vat. lat. 375),³⁷ which allows us to follow this development in even greater detail. This second manuscript is so closely related to the one in Turin in general appearance, script, and character and style of its miniatures, that they may be considered twins. Even the two types of box-like interiors recur identically in the Vatican manuscript. It was certainly produced in the same scriptorium and at exactly the same date, the second decade of the fourteenth century.

The Vatican codex contains the lives of the monastic saints of Egypt. Most of it is made up of two famous texts which are among our principal sources of early Egyptian monasticism: the *Historia monachorum in Egypto*, a collection of narratives of the ascetics of the desert, and descriptions of the various monasteries and lives of the hermits;³⁸ and the *Apophthegmata patrum*, the Sayings of the Egyptian Fathers, a vast body of anecdotes and aphorisms, half historical, half legendary, including speculations about the virtues of monastic life, stories about the well-known hermits, etc.³⁹ Both are fourth-century works originally written in Greek, but translated into Latin at an

³⁶ P. A. Underwood, "Fourth preliminary Report on the Restoration of the Frescoes in the Kariye Camii at Istanbul . . .," *Dumbarton Oaks Papers*, 13 (1959), fig. 3 ff.

³⁷ Vatasso and Franchi de' Cavalieri, *Codices Vaticani Latini*, I (Rome, 1902), p. 292 f.; A. Poncelet, *Catalogus codicum hagiographicorum latinorum Bibl. Vaticanae* (Brussels, 1910), p. 17 f.; P. Toesca, *Il Medioevo* (Turin, 1927), pp. 1022, 1134; Toesca, *Il Trecento* (Turin, 1951), p. 842, note 50; one miniature is reproduced in R. Pallucchini, *La pittura veneziana del Trecento* (Venice-Rome, 1964), fig. 261.

³⁸ Migne, PL, 21, cols. 387-460.

³⁹ *Idem*, PL, 73, cols. 855-1062.

early date, probably as early as the sixth century. The manuscript, illustrated throughout by the same hand, is of a quality superior to that in Turin; the illustrations are more uniform, but also somewhat repetitive. The system of illustration corresponds to that in Turin; frequently three or four marginal miniatures are arranged on top of each other on the same page, a device commonly found in Byzantine manuscripts.⁴⁰ But, as no illustrations of the Greek versions of these texts are known, it is not possible to say at once whether the cycle of illustration is also derived from a Byzantine source.

Unfortunately, only one saint's life is illustrated in both manuscripts; so only in this one instance is it possible to compare the two cycles in any detail. This is the story of St. Marina, one of the Eastern female monks who suffered on account of a false charge of incontinence.⁴¹ The miniatures in the two manuscripts are closely related iconographically, but they are not identical. The two illuminators seem to have made a slightly different selection from a model which contained a more comprehensive cycle.

In both manuscripts there are four pictures to illustrate the story. The first at least represents the same subject: Marina, dressed as a monk, goes to market in the monastery's chariot drawn by two oxen (figs. 23, 24). It must be admitted that, apart from their subject, the two miniatures have little in common; neither in the chariot, nor in the team of oxen, nor in the protagonist "himself" is there striking similarity. Still, this is a very minor episode which adds hardly anything to the understanding of the story; the probability is that it was included in both cycles because they drew on a common source, though each master gave his own personal version of the common model. The Turin Marina wears a Benedictine cowl, and even the stylistic treatment of "his" habit is identical with that of the Benedict story in the same manuscript;⁴² in the Vatican copy "he" wears the Eastern monk's dress, and a hood, the *cucullum*, which had to be worn by the Egyptian monks at all times.⁴³

Marina—so the story goes—had been accused by an innkeeper's daughter of being the father of her illegitimate child. In the Turin version, the baby is handed over to the young monk by its mother (fig. 25); in the Vatican manuscript, Marina admits "his" supposed guilt to "his" superior, and, after being expelled from the monastery, sits for several years at its door caring for the infant entrusted to "his" charge (fig. 26). Finally, "his" humility gained "him" the abbot's forgiveness; in the next Turin miniature "he" is seen sweeping the floor of the monastery and doing other rough work allotted to "him" (fig. 27). Only the last miniature again represents the same subject in both manuscripts (figs. 28, 29): the discovery of the supposed monk's sex after "his" death, when "his" body is made ready for the grave. In spite of many differences of detail, the two illustrations must go back to the same model.

⁴⁰ The best known Byzantine manuscripts of this type are the psalters with marginal illustrations; other texts illustrated in this manner will be adduced later in this paper.

⁴¹ The text found in both manuscripts is that reprinted in Migne, PL, 73, cols. 691–694.

⁴² Cf., e.g., our fig. 2.

⁴³ Philippus Oppenheim, *Das Mönchskleid im christlichen Altertum*, Römische Quartalschrift, Supplementheft 28 (Freiburg, 1931), p. 142.

At the same time, comparison shows that the model was never slavishly copied; it served only as a source of inspiration. The filling in of the secondary features and, as it were, of the local color, and even the selection of scenes were to a large extent left to the initiative of the individual master and to his own visual imagination.

Many examples could be given to demonstrate the independent approach of the illuminators of the two manuscripts to their task. I shall here single out only the story of Ammon—the first monk to retire into the Nitrian desert—which is included in the Vatican codex. When still a young man, Ammon, against his wishes, had been forced by his parents to marry. In figure 30 he is seen in the bridal chamber, arguing with his bride in order to convert her to the ideals of monastic life. The formula recurs with hardly any changes in the Turin manuscript, in the illustration of the legend of St. Alexius (fig. 31), of whom much the same story is told.⁴⁴ It appears that suitable pictorial types could be transferred from the illustration of one saint's life to that of another. Moreover, in the Alexius miniature, the entire bridal chamber, including the curtains, is quite superficially inserted into one of those box-like interiors with receding walls and coffered ceiling which we have already seen, a setting which it clearly does not at all fit.

Yet, in spite of the versatility of the master of the Vatican manuscript, one would like to think that his illustrations of the lives of Eastern monks were for the best part based on a Byzantine cycle. Unfortunately, very little is known about the illustration of monastic texts in Byzantine art, and, since so little has come down to us, it is worth mentioning that short extracts from the text of the *Apophthegmata* are incorporated in that well-known florilegium, the *Sacra Parallela* of St. John of Damascus, and that in the Paris manuscript of the *Sacra Parallela*, a ninth-century book probably of Palestinian origin,⁴⁵ some of them are actually illustrated.⁴⁶ Regrettably, these illustrated passages have no counterpart in the Vatican manuscript and it is therefore impossible to say whether they were derived from the same archetype as were the Vatican miniatures. But they do show that the Sayings of the Fathers were illustrated in Byzantine art with cycles of marginal pictures. Now, with this fact in mind, I shall turn to the only Greek monastic text of which a number of illustrated copies survive: the *Scala Paradisi* of St. John Climacus.⁴⁷ The author of this edifying book, a spiritual exercise of great psychological power, was abbot of the Sinai Monastery about the year 600; the earliest known copies with illustrations, however, date only from the late eleventh century. The pictorial cycles of the three or four finest manuscripts are almost entirely independent of each other; they seem to be *ad hoc* compilations based

⁴⁴ For other illustrations of the Alexius legend, see O. Pächt, C. R. Dodwell, and Fr. Wormald, *The St. Albans Psalter*, Studies of the Warburg Institute, 25 (London, 1960), p. 126ff., pl. 35.

⁴⁵ K. Weitzmann, "Die Illustration der Septuaginta," *Münchener Jahrbuch der bildenden Kunst*, 3. Folge 3/4 (1952/53), p. 105.

⁴⁶ J. R. Martin, "An Early Illustration of *The Sayings of the Fathers*," *The Art Bulletin*, 32 (1950), p. 293ff.

⁴⁷ *Idem*, *The Illustration of the Heavenly Ladder of John Climacus*, Studies in Manuscript Illumination, 5 (Princeton, 1954).

on a nucleus which must have consisted of traditional material suitable for the illustration of all kinds of monastic literature.⁴⁸ The earliest dated manuscript, now in the University Library at Princeton, N. J., is from the year 1084.⁴⁹ It has a number of marginal illustrations showing monks dwelling in caves, reading, praying, and performing various manual tasks (fig. 32);⁵⁰ many invite detailed comparison with the miniatures of the Vatican manuscript (fig. 33). The similarity is close enough to make one think of a common archetype. The caves themselves, too, the usual abodes of the monks in the western desert which were mostly disused tombs carved into the rocks, are very much alike; sometimes they are terraced, with various openings at different heights containing one anchorite each (figs. 34, 35).⁵¹ Obviously, the very numerous little scenes of this type in the Sicilian manuscript are derived from a Greek model which was a close relative of the Climacus manuscript in Princeton.

The comparison is equally valid in the realm of style. A second Climacus manuscript, now in the Vatican Library, again a work of the late eleventh century,⁵² has many comparable representations of monks (figs. 36, 37), with their pallia falling in straight lines, the same rather summarily treated, carefully prearranged layers of drapery, the same streaky high lights. Moreover, all the details of the middle Byzantine monastic habit recur, including the rather prominent megaloschemata. Still, the Climacus monks are somewhat more ascetic and emaciated in appearance, and, generally speaking, the Sicilian manuscript lacks that dry elegance which distinguishes the style of late eleventh-century manuscripts from Constantinople. Even closer comparisons can be found in the beautiful and slightly earlier lectionary in the Dionysiu Monastery on Mount Athos which is illuminated in a somewhat more classical style, with a more articulated and more generous treatment of draperies, strong modelling of the human figures, and circular motifs on thighs, elbows, and shoulders (figs. 38, 40).⁵³ The buildings, too, are mostly of the Greek eleventh-century type; simple, tall, gabled structures with roof tiles of identical design (figs. 39, 41). We may take it that the Byzantine manuscript that was available to the Sicilian master belonged to the middle or the beginning of the second half of the eleventh century, the most active period in the history of monasticism and monastic art in Constantinople.

But this model was not reproduced *in extenso*. I have already given some examples of this master's innovations in the iconographical field; his contribution to the style is even more striking. He delighted in embellishing his figures with flowing ends of draperies and other Palaeologan motifs, which show his familiarity with contemporary Constantinopolitan illumination, and which are, as it were, superimposed on the style of his model without being assimilated (figs. 42, 43). Evidently he was just as conversant with the most

⁴⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 121 ff.

⁴⁹ *Ibid.*, p. 24 ff., pls. ix-xv.

⁵⁰ *Ibid.*, pls. xi-xiv.

⁵¹ Fig. 35 serves at the same time as an initial "I," a fact which explains its elongated shape.

⁵² J. R. Martin, *Heavenly Ladder*, *op. cit.*, p. 47 ff.; pls. xvi-xliv.

⁵³ On the Dionysiu Lectionary, see K. Weitzmann, *Aus den Bibliotheken des Athos* (Hamburg, 1963), p. 65 ff.

recent developments in Byzantine art as were the masters of the manuscript in Turin.

Even this is not yet the whole story. A few illustrations must be considered separately. They are large-scale compositions filling the entire lower margins of the pages, in which the somewhat drab and austere presentation of monastic life offered by the smaller miniatures is replaced by a more detailed narrative, with elaborate accessories and ample architectural and landscape settings. This type of miniature is not at all in the middle Byzantine tradition, and cannot have been contained in the eleventh-century model of our cycle. The luxuriant setting of the garden of the monastery of the Abbot Isidore, in the Thebaid (fig. 44), is an illustration of one rather colorless sentence: *Putei plures, horti irrigui, omnium quoque pomorum arborumque paradisi*.⁵⁴ There are trees and bushes of many different kinds, among them two palm trees not mentioned in the text but very realistically rendered with fan-like leaves and clusters of date fruits; an overwhelming naturalism which almost makes one think of late antique floor mosaics. The probability is that this miniature contains a rather modest nucleus taken over from the eleventh-century model and corresponding exactly to what one finds in the smaller miniatures. This nucleus consists of a well in the center, a rocky ground line, perhaps one or two of the trees, and the four figures engaged in the various activities described in the text. But these traditional elements are incorporated into a new and original setting; instead of the isolated small scenes there is an elaborate, self-contained composition; the monastery is surrounded by a circular enclosure which conveys a new sense of spaciousness and imparts a rhythmical movement to the composition as a whole. No doubt these far-reaching innovations are due to the influence of the narrative style evolved in the Palaeologan art of Constantinople, known to us mainly through the mosaics of the Kariye Camii, which are roughly contemporary with the Sicilian manuscripts.⁵⁵

Next, the town of Oxyrhynchus (fig. 45),⁵⁶ consisting of a hexagonal wall with square, flat-roofed watchtowers, is an ultimately Hellenistic type of city representation familiar to all students of Early Christian manuscripts and mosaics. But this, again, is one of those numerous single motifs of early origin taken up by the Palaeologan Renaissance. It recurs for instance several times among the mosaics of the Kariye Camii; in the example here reproduced (fig. 47) it is adapted to fit the shape of the lunette in which the scene is contained. Even the building in the center of the town is similar: a church on a centralized plan, with a cupola on a high drum, which reminds one of Early Christian martyria.⁵⁷ The bishop who welcomes the Egyptian Fathers under the porch of the church is a Western ecclesiastic, with mitre and crozier, and is accompanied by Latin monks. To the left and right, outside the city gates, are the

⁵⁴ Migne, PL, 21 col. 439.

⁵⁵ Cf. P. A. Underwood, "Palaeologan Narrative Style and an Italianate Fresco of the Fifteenth Century in the Kariye Djami" in *Studies in the History of Art dedicated to William E. Suida on his eightieth Birthday* (London, 1959), p. 1 ff.

⁵⁶ Migne, PL, 21 cols. 408/09.

⁵⁷ A. Grabar, *Martyrium*, I (Paris, 1946), p. 270 ff.

senior citizens of the town, heavily overdressed Palaeologan figures, who welcome the ubiquitous *pauperes et peregrini*, and show them to the pilgrims' hostel. The pilgrims wear sheepskin coats, which were the standard travelling outfit of the Egyptian Fathers,⁵⁸ but at the same time they are represented as contemporary, Western mediaeval pilgrims, with broad-brimmed hats and scrips decorated with St. James' shells. Again one feels that the middle Byzantine model may have contained just the small scenes in front of the church and at the city gates, consisting only of a few figures each, and that the setting was introduced into the cycle from outside, i.e., from a contemporary Palaeologan source.

Finally, the most puzzling picture in the manuscript is that which depicts the story of Abbot Moses the Ethiopian (fig. 46). The Abbot Moses, before his conversion, was a robber and a thief.⁵⁹ One day he set out to attack a shepherd who guarded his flocks on the opposite bank of the Nile. He wound his tunic round his head, like a turban, and swam across the river, his knife between his teeth. When he found that his prospective victim had gone into hiding, he killed the four finest rams in the herd, tied them together, attached them to a line, and returned to his own side of the river, pulling the rams through the water. All this, even the most insignificant detail, is faithfully illustrated in the miniature. Moses is black, as befits an Ethiopian, and swims with vigorous strokes through the Nile. The figure has parallels among the floating and drowning people in representations of the Great Flood, from early works like the Vienna Genesis and the Ashburnham Pentateuch to nearly contemporary ones like the mosaic of Monreale;⁶⁰ but its twisted movement, with the body seen from the back and the spine clearly marked, is a characteristically Palaeologan mannerism.⁶¹

Moreover, the scene is set in a truly Nilotic landscape of great beauty, about which the text says nothing, with exotic trees and aquatic and other birds of many kinds, which remind one again of antique floor mosaics.⁶² Still, the treatment of the landscape is not classical. The river flowing down a steep gorge to the left is best compared with that of the Finding of Moses—also a scene set on the banks of the Nile—in the Exodus cupola of the narthex of San Marco in Venice (fig. 49), a work about a generation earlier than our miniature and under the strong influence of early Palaeologan art.⁶³ Most of the other single motifs, too, though ultimately of Hellenistic origin, are found in Palaeologan works. The bird to the left flying toward his nest to feed his young, who are waiting with wide open beaks, recurs in the Kariye Camii in the mosaic of the Annunciation to Anne (fig. 48), who, according to the Protoevangelium of James, was moved to lament her childlessness by the sight

⁵⁸ P. Oppenheim, *op. cit.*, p. 121.

⁵⁹ Migne, PL, 74, col. 368.

⁶⁰ O. Demus, *op. cit.*, pl. 100; E. Kitzinger, *Monreale*, pl. 25.

⁶¹ Cf. O. Demus, "Die Entstehung des Paläologenstils in der Malerei," *Berichte zum 11. Internationalen Byzantinistenkongress* (Munich, 1958), p. 14.

⁶² Cf., e.g., the well-known "Nilotic" mosaic of Palestrina: G. Gullini, *I mosaici di Palestrina* (Rome, 1956).

⁶³ O. Demus, *Paläologenstil*, *op. cit.*, p. 39.

of a bird's nest in a tree, which reminded her of procreation.⁶⁴ Similar water-fowl are seen inhabiting the banks of the river Jordan in the story of St. John the Baptist in the same church (fig. 50). These comparisons can only mean that the Nilotic setting as a whole was borrowed from contemporary Byzantine art, in all probability from an illuminated manuscript produced in Constantinople. The Sicilian master must have known and studied a contemporary Greek miniature, which was in its turn inspired by some early prototype, and which evoked to an amazing degree the atmosphere in which the lives of the Egyptian Fathers had originally been set.

The school of illumination which flourished in Palermo under the Aragonese kings must have started soon after the Sicilian Vespers, as a deliberate patriotic revival of the artistic traditions of the Norman Kingdom. Even from a stylistic point of view the two Gospel fragments which I mentioned first, straightforward reproductions of twelfth-century mosaics, stand at the beginning of the development; they still belong to the late thirteenth century. The two manuscripts in Turin and the Vatican should be dated some fifteen to twenty years later, and mark a decisive step forward in the program of the scriptorium. The illustrations draw on a number of different models, most of which are representative of the various influences which had played their part in the artistic heritage of the Norman period: Monte Cassino, Rome, and, especially, Byzantium during the reign of the Comneni. There can be no doubt that Greek manuscripts of the eleventh and twelfth centuries played a major part in this revival movement. At the same time, the scriptorium was open to various contemporary influences which were absorbed in the process of copying. Some emanated from the Italian mainland, from Rome, Tuscany, and Bologna, while others can be traced to the Palaeologan art of Constantinople which had created its most outstanding works precisely in the early years of the fourteenth century. The Palaeologan elements constitute the most unexpected as well as the most fascinating aspect of the two manuscripts, especially of that in the Vatican. Mannered Palaeologan drapery motifs give pointed accents to figures and groups, and invest them with an exaggerated, almost neurotic, liveliness. Rocky landscapes provide an uninterrupted foil for the hagiographical narrative, which has itself become more diffuse and more articulate; in a few instances the rather meagre and nondescript iconographical material is elaborated into grand, independent pictures, real "Renaissance" compositions of glowing beauty, which are in their way unique among preserved illuminations of the period. They do have close parallels in Palaeologan mosaics, but not, as far as we can see, in surviving Greek manuscripts. Still, the probability is that they were inspired by Byzantine miniatures of the late thirteenth or early fourteenth century which are now lost. It is the Palaeologan contribution which raised the work of the scriptorium above the level of an artificial revival

⁶⁴ Protoevangelium, II, 1-4; cf. J. Lafontaine-Dosogne, *Iconographie de l'enfance de la Vierge dans l'Empire byzantin et en Occident*, I. Académie royale de Belgique, Classe des Beaux-Arts, Mémoires, XI (Brussels, 1964), p. 68 ff.

of Sicily's own achievements during a more prosperous period in the more or less distant past, and which instilled new life into the retrospective and somewhat sterile tradition established in the wake of the national liberation movement.

One feels that a scriptorium capable of producing the masterpieces in Turin and the Vatican must have been organized on a grand scale. But we have to admit that among preserved works, the two manuscripts have few relatives. Closest in style is the splendid Bible in the Glazier Collection in New York, which is about ten to fifteen years later in date;⁶⁵ it shows a certain hardening of the figure style, and a new and powerful influx of decorative elements from the Italian mainland. Other manuscripts from Palermo may still be awaiting discovery or recognition.⁶⁶ It must be said, however, that the art practiced by this scriptorium had, just as Sicilian political independence itself, no future, for the second half of Frederick's reign brought a series of setbacks, and his heirs were unable to keep his heritage intact. As the national revival which had started with such high hopes came to nothing and the Sicilians finally realized that they had merely exchanged one form of foreign domination for another, this magnificent anachronism lost its impetus. Moreover, it had nothing to contribute to the development of Italian Trecento painting, which started from a different interpretation of Byzantine models, offered by the schools of Bologna and Tuscany. The native Sicilian tradition succumbed more and more to powerful influences from the more vigorous North, especially Pisa, and Sicily sank back into a period of provincial obscurity.

⁶⁵ *The Dyson Perrins Collection, Part III, Catalogue of the fifty-nine illuminated manuscripts... sold... by Messrs. Sotheby & Co., 29 November 1960* (London, 1960), no. 111, p. 41f., pls. 17, 18.

⁶⁶ It appears that only a single manuscript belonging to this group has survived in Palermo itself; cf. A. Daneu Lattanzi, *I Manoscritti ed incunaboli miniati della Sicilia, I: Biblioteca Nazionale di Palermo* (Rome, 1965), no. 17, p. 56ff., pl. xv, Petrus Comestor. There is another early fourteenth-century manuscript from Sicily in Florence: Biblioteca Riccardiana, no. 881: *Excidium Troiae* (a mediaeval reworking of a prose summary of Virgil's *Aeneid*); cf. R. Foerster, "Laokoon im Mittelalter und in der Renaissance," *Jahrbuch der kgl. preussischen Kunstsammlungen*, 27 (1906), p. 149 ff., fig. 1; *Excidium Troiae*, ed. by E. Bagby Attwood and V. K. Whitacker (Cambridge, Mass., 1944) (Medieval Academy of America Publication no. 44), with two unnumbered plates; *Catalogo, Mostra storica nazionale della Miniatura*, Palazzo di Venezia, Roma (Florence, 1953), no. 436; M. L. Scuricini Greco, *Miniature Riccardiane* (Florence, 1958), no. 156, p. 180.



1. Turin. MS I.II.17, Fol. 103



2. Vat. lat. 1202, Fol. 40

Fire in Monastery Kitchen



3. Turin. MS I.II.17, Fol. 12



4. Mount Sinai. Icon, detail

St. Nicholas Saves Innocent Men



5. Turin. MS I.II.17, Fol. 12v

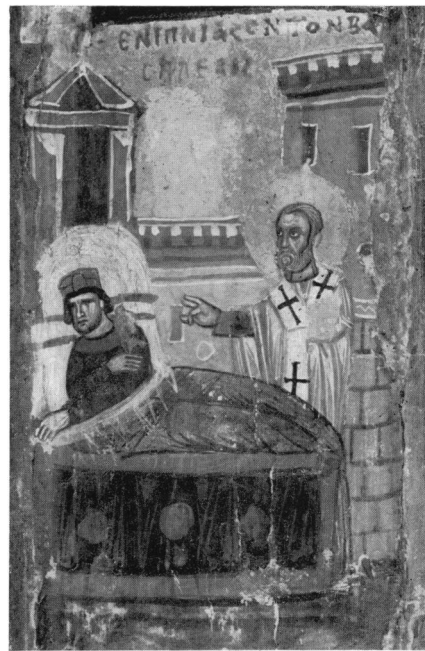


6. Mount Sinai. Icon, detail

The Three Generals in Prison



7. Turin. MS I.II.17, Fol. 13



8. Mount Sinai. Icon, detail
St. Nicholas Appears to Constantine



9. Turin. MS I.II.17, Fol. 10v
St. Nicholas Stills the Storm



10. Mount Sinai. Icon, detail
St. Nicholas Stills the Storm



11. Turin. MS I.II.17, Fol. 9



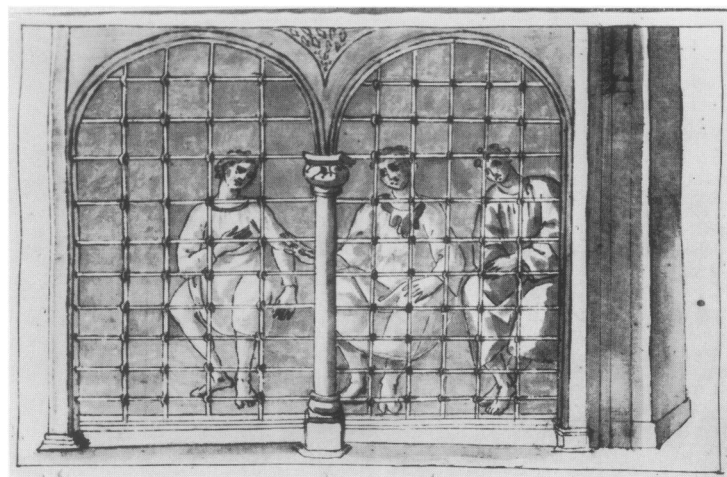
12. Mount Sinai. Icon, detail
St. Nicholas Provides Poor Girls with Dowry



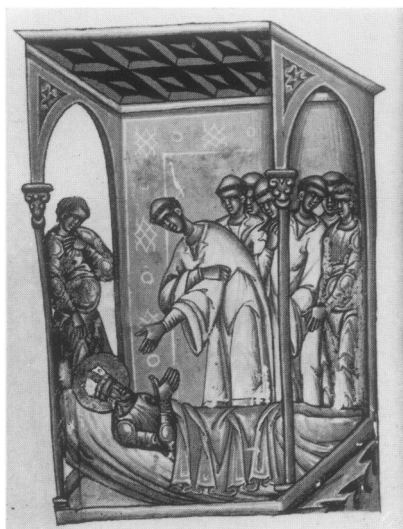
13. Turin. MS I.II.17, Fol. 50,
Death of St. Euprosyne



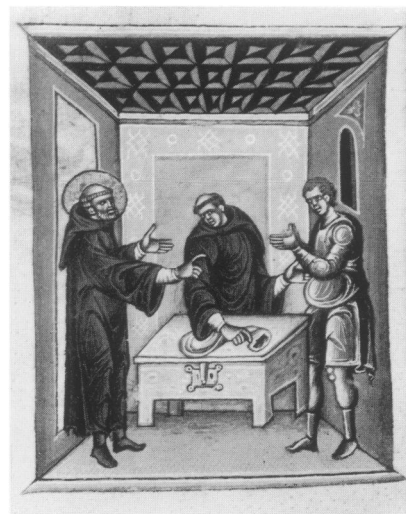
14. Turin. MS I.II.17, Fol. 10,
St. Nicholas Recognized by a Bishop



15. Rome, S. Paolo fuori le mura (formerly).
Fresco, Joseph in Prison



16. Turin. MS I.II.17, Fol. 217v,
Death of St. Martin



17. Turin. MS I.II.17, Fol. 106v,
St. Benedict and the Peasant



18. Turin. MS I.II.17, Fol. 56v,
St. Maurus Performing a Miracle



20. London, British Museum.
Add. 18720, Fol. 2, detail, St. Jerome



19. Turin. MS I.II.17, Fol. 63, St. Jerome



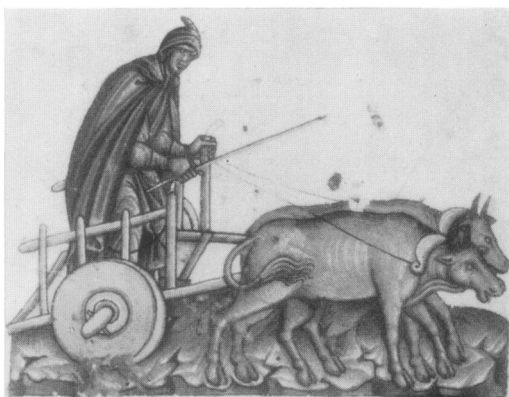
21. Turin. MS I.II.17, Fol. 215,
St. Martin



22. Turin. MS I.II.17, Fol. 41,
Death of Julian the Apostate



23. Turin. MS I.II.17, Fol. 151v,
St. Marina Driving to Market



24. Vat. lat. 375, Fol. 38v,
Episodes from Life of St. Marina



25. Turin. MS I.II.17, Fol. 152, St. Marina
and the Innkeeper's Daughter



26. Vat. lat. 375, Fol. 38v, St. Marina
and the Child of the Innkeeper's Daughter



27. Turin. MS I.II.17, Fol. 152,
St. Marina Working in the Monastery



28. Turin. MS I.II.17, Fol. 152



29. Vat. lat. 375, Fol. 39
St. Marina's Death



30. Vat. Lat. 375, Fol. 27,
St. Ammon and his Bride



31. Turin. MS I.II.17, Fol. 147,
St. Alexius and his Bride



32. Princeton, University Library.
Garrett MS 16, Fol. 66v, Anchorite in Cave



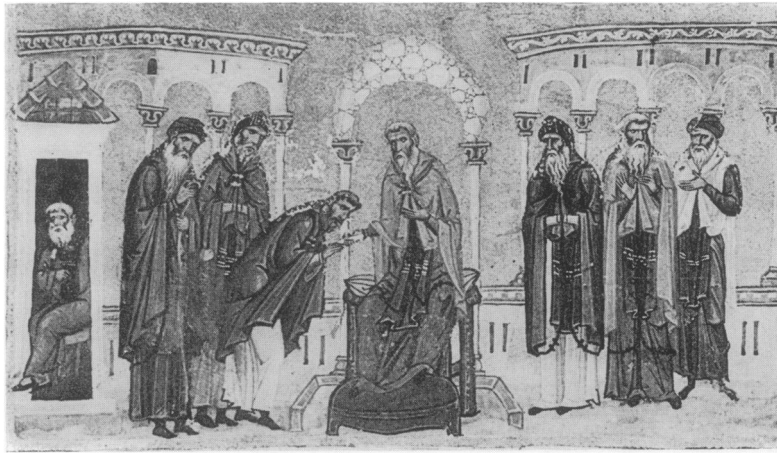
33. Vat. lat. 375, Fol. 18v,
Anchorite in Cave



34. Princeton, University Library.
Garrett MS 16, Fol. 113v, Anchorites in Caves



35. Vat. lat. 375, Fol. 19,
Anchorites in Caves



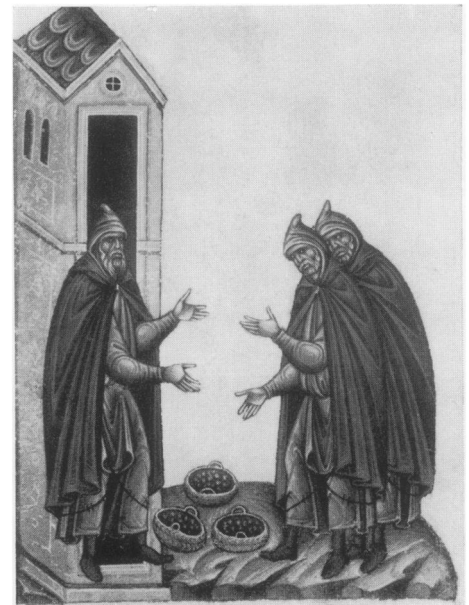
36. Vat. gr. 394, Fol. 5, Exchange of Letters



37. Vat. lat. 375, Fol. 17,
Three Monks



38. Vat. lat. 375, Fol. 64,
Egyptian Monks



39. Vat. lat. 375, Fol. 105,
Monks Bargaining



40. Mount Athos, Dionysiu. MS 740 (587),
Fol. 53, Last Supper



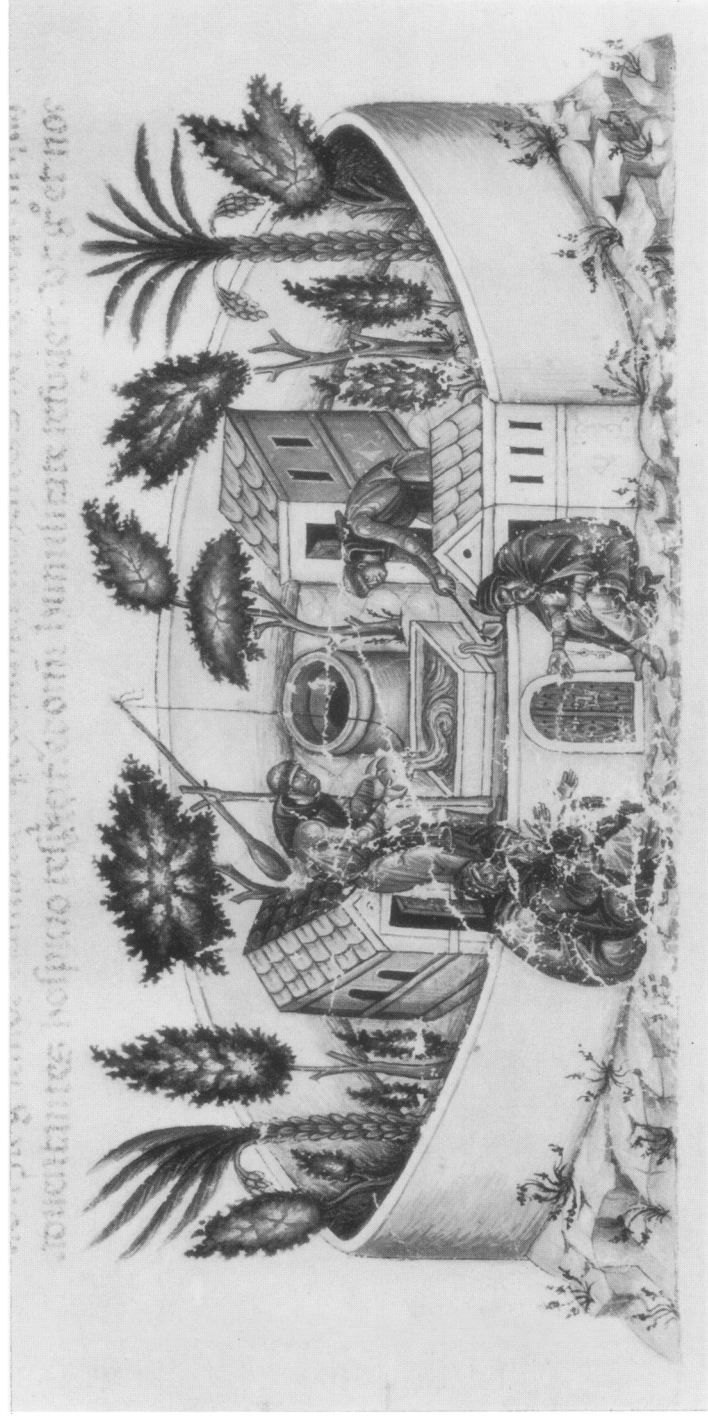
41. Mount Athos, Dionysiu. MS 740 (587), Fol. 50,
Anointing of Christ's Feet



42. Vat. lat. 375, Fol. 25v, St. Macarius
Performing a Miracle

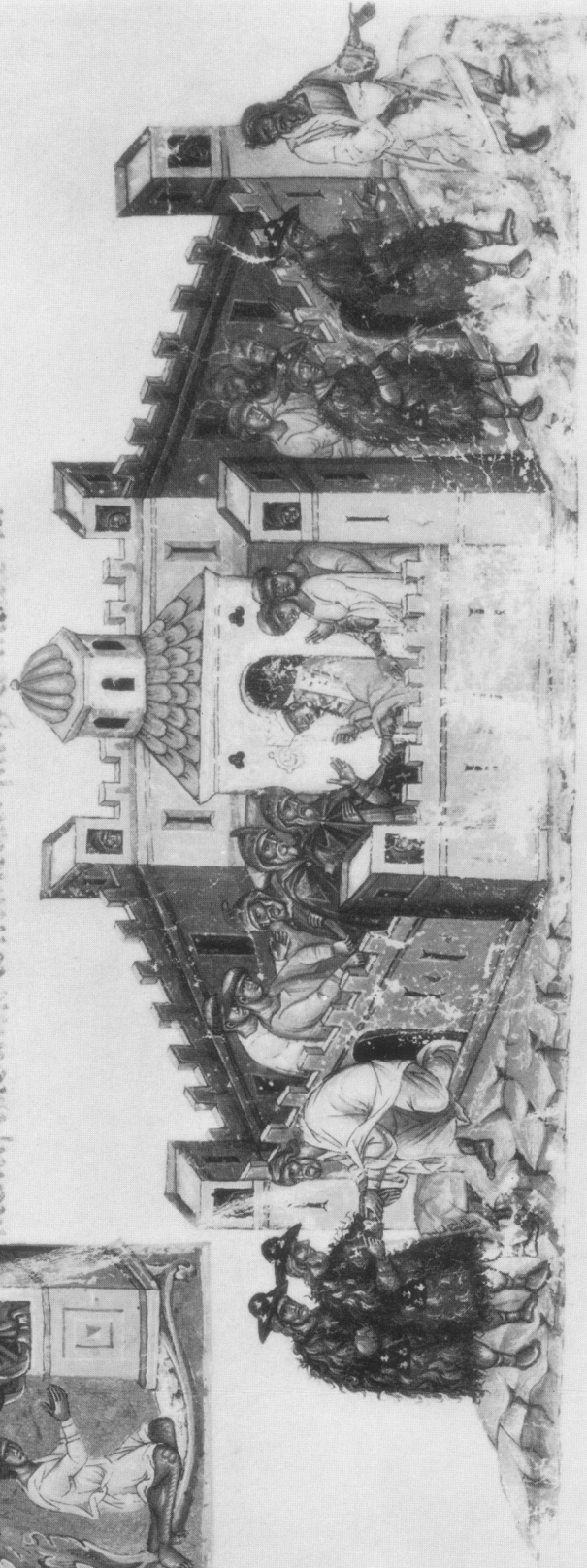


43. Vat. lat. 375, Fol. 20, St. Paphnutius
and the Angel



44. Vat. lat. 375, Fol. 21v, Monastery of the Abbot Isidore

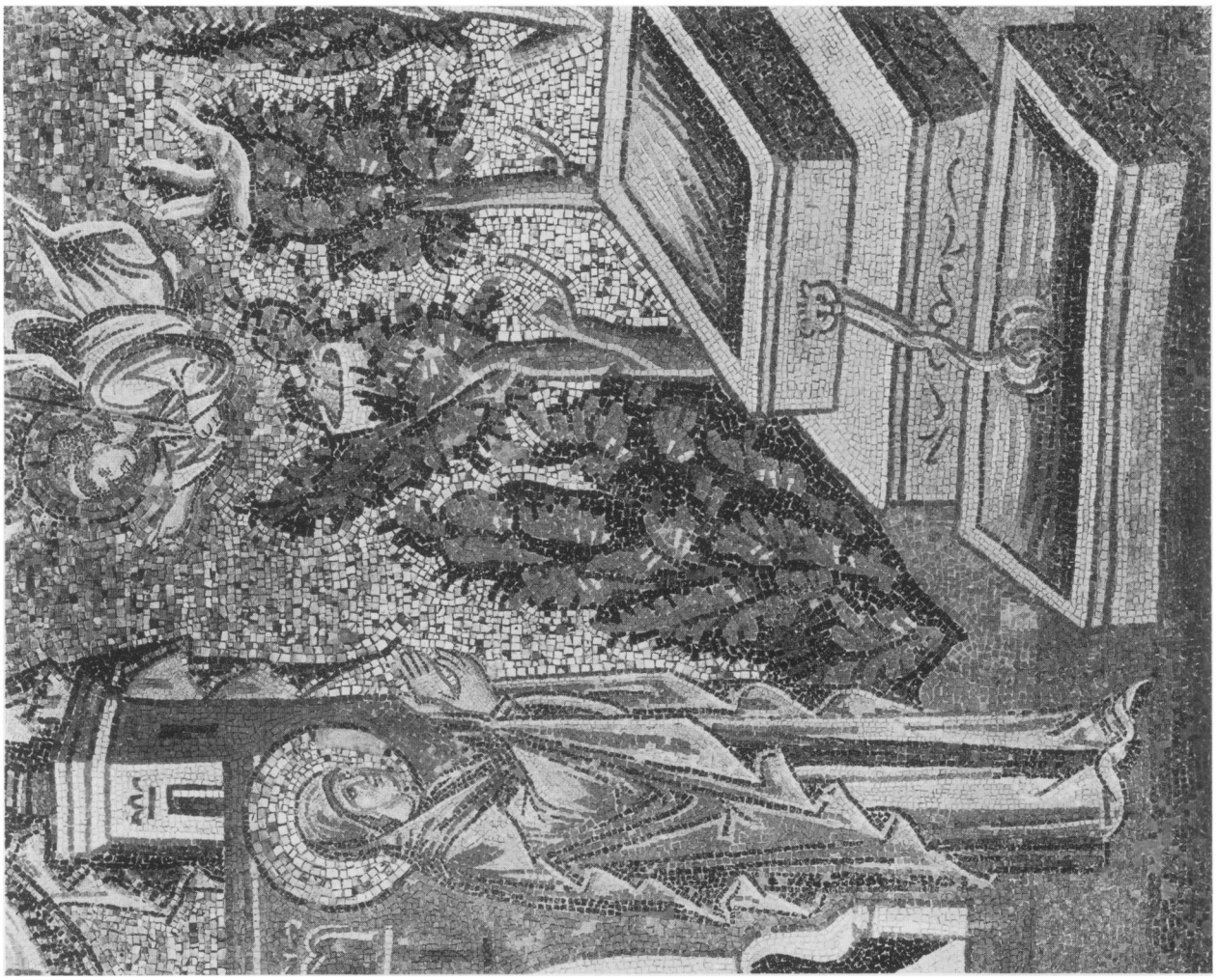
sed ep̄o loca illa iugiter nulla iugiter. et tē multa monachos. de feno
 perit. Quorū oīum affectus eia nos et honore q̄ erubuit nob̄ expo
 nere nec fmo sufficit. nec ictu punit. Et quo n̄ pullos n̄r iquite
 rem̄ inuicēq; n̄r. sapientes nos sibi et ad se totū cupiunt. Dicit
 m̄s q̄q; ibi plures s̄ p̄m oīes ex ḡas hacten. nos iusto ex
 alios multitudine et alios i signis et iūte. in iustis. Sicut et
 ad q̄m orauit. Inquit et iusto theone. Dicit
 et alii non longe ab iusto ex p̄t q̄ m̄t ad
 herem. n̄die t̄p̄o rem̄ n̄r iustitiam celli sui
 clausi solent. et n̄ p̄t n̄r iustitiam in iis
 fieri. habuisse contine. quos et m̄os in



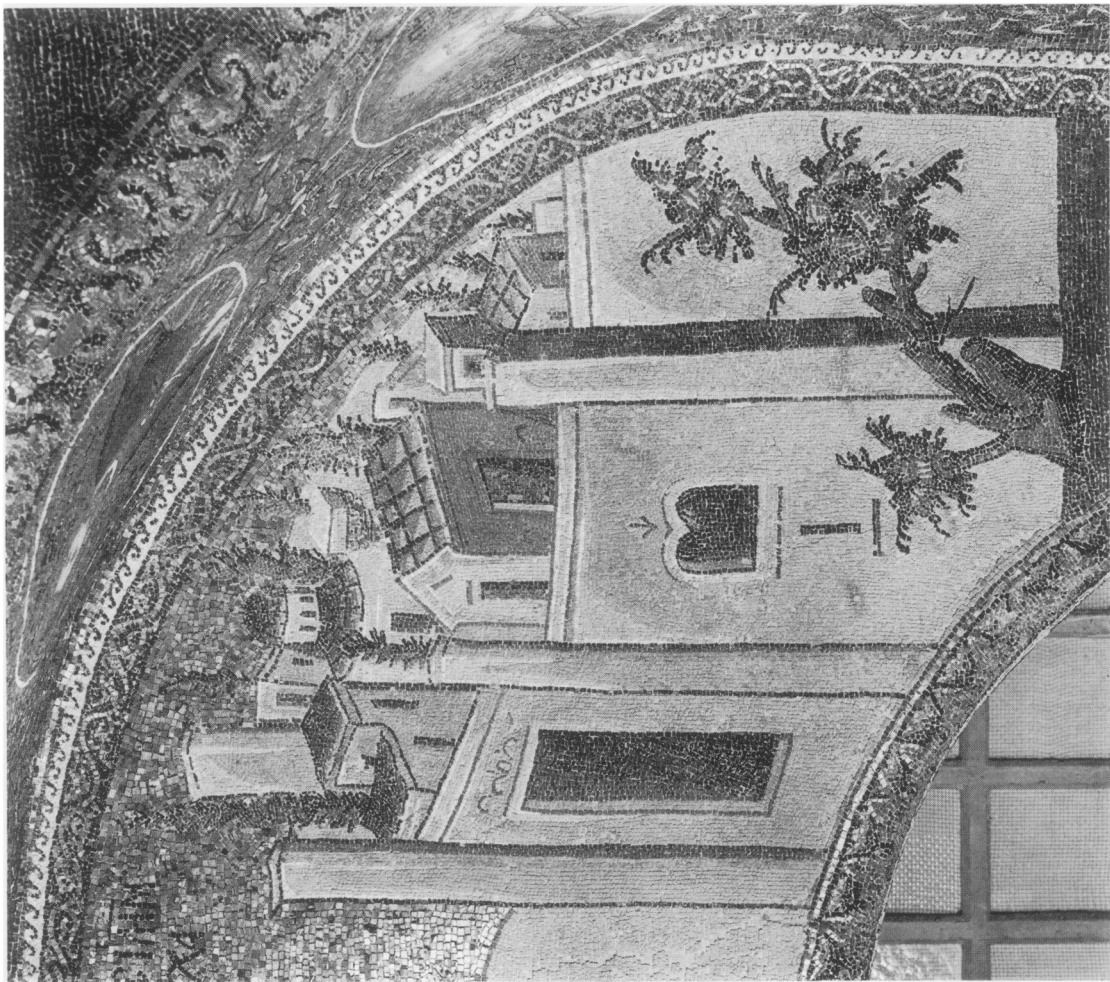
45. Vat. lat. 375, Fol. 9, Town of Oxyrhynchus



46. Vat. lat. 375, Fol. 54v, Story of the Abbot Moses



48. Istanbul, Kariye Camii. Mosaic, Annunciation to St. Anne



47. Istanbul, Kariye Camii. Mosaic, detail, A Town



49. Venice, San Marco, Narthex. Mosaic, detail, Finding of Moses



50. Istanbul, Kariye Camii. Mosaic, Story of St. John the Baptist, detail